16

BAKEMONOGATARI

OH!GREAT

Original Story:
NISIOISIN

Original Character
Design: VOFAN

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ORIGINAL STORY:

NISIOISIN

16

ORIGINAL CHARACTER
DESIGN: VOFAN

MAIN CHARACTERS

Koyomi Araragi

A boy who became a "mockery of a vampire" after being attacked by one. He considers Hanekawa to have saved his life after the events that took place during spring break.

Tsubasa Hanekawa

Koyomi's friend who goes to the same school as him, and an honor student that few honors could sufficiently describe. After becoming bewitched by a cat, she suddenly sprouts cat ears and goes to Koyomi for help.

Mèmè Oshino

A self-described expert on aberrations who appeared in front of Koyomi one day. Now temporarily based out of the town of Naoetsu, he often agrees to speak with Koyomi about his problems.

Shinobu Oshino

Once called the "king of aberrations," she is now a husk of a vampire. Mèmè has given her a new name, and her existence is bound to this name.

THE STORY SO FAR

Tuesday, June 13. Koyomi Araragi's girlfriend, Hitagi Senjogahara, invites him out for a date, and he feels certain that his hellish days, which began when he encountered a vampire during spring break, have come to an end. Just then, the delighted Koyomi is greeted by an SOS text from Tsubasa Hanekawa. When he rushes to her, he sees a familiar sight: Hanekawa with a pair of newly sprouted cat ears. *The events that took place during Golden Week* were supposed to be over, but did they ever really end...?

直江津本町
Naoetsu Hon-machi
新田六丁目
Nita 6
Chapter 5
Tsubasa Cat
BOOK DESIGN VEIA
新田六丁目
Nita 6
直江津本町
Naoetsu Hon-machi

BAKEMONOGATARI

SAFETY!!
POINT, CONFIRM, Okay!
AND DOUBLE-CHECK

Out of no-where...

...I realized that I'd grown completely used to visiting these ruins...

...and that aberrations were no longer something out of the ordinary to me.

AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

...

Hm?

Yeah.

This is it, Hane-kawa.

KSSHNK

Is this really the place, Araragi?

...Mmh.

...?!

Huh...?

NO ENTRY

That's far enough!

NO ENTRY

Was this building... always this small?

!!

...it felt like it was about as big as Naoetsu High's main building...

When I duked it out with Kanbaru in here, it was more, well...

And the girl next to you. Umm...

O-Oh... Well, if it isn't you, Araragi.

SST

What're you doing, Oshino?

Hm?

I didn't even know he was capable of that.

Was he... surprised just now? That's not like him.

...

but that sound effect made things clear. It's gotta be you, Missy Class President.

I have trouble identifying women when they change their hairstyle,

...Sound effect?

It's nice to see you again.

BLUP

Anyway, Missy. You look *good* in that hat.

Oh... Huh? That so? Ha haa.

For someone who always sounds like he sees through it all—this isn't like you.

it's always "I've *been* waiting" or "you're late"...

What's with you? Every time I *come* here,

...

Thank you.

...

DO [illegible] TER

That's actually a talent, in a sense.

Maybe you oughta cherish it.

Ha haa.

So *that's* how it is, Araragi.

You really can't go three steps without attracting trouble, can you?

Actually, Araragi.

I'm busy. Don't have much time.

I'm in the middle of some-thing for once.

Well, you could call it work if you wanted.

...None of those things sound natural coming from his mouth...

Busy? Not much time?

Oh... Were you— in the middle of work?

You're one thing, Araragi, but I can be flexible if it's something serious with Missy Class President.

But it's fine.

Gimme a break with that creepy stuff. It's unsettling.

You're not looking for me to like you, are you?

You're being really dismissive of me today ...

SHOO SHOO

...

...I really don't think this is the same place.

Araragi. Thinking back to spring break...

A Sawari-neko.

Afflict, as in to affect.

It not only means "to touch,"

it also refers to the most vital and precious part to see or hear in a work of drama or music.

An "Afflicting Cat."

Or a Silver Cat.

An Afflicting Cat— in other words.

A cat that exposes the heart of the matter.

An affliction that is a cat, or an Afflicting Cat.

This concept of affliction originated as a term in dramatic *joruri** recitation.

They're also called Dancing Cats, but not often, due to another creature with the same name. Too confusing to bother.

*A traditional form of chanted, narrative music accompanied by the shamisen and used in bunraku puppet plays.

Ha haa. Well, you may be one thing, Araragi.

But I'm sure this all goes without saying for you, Missy Class President?

Hey.

Stop saying "You're one thing, Araragi" like it's some sort of refrain.

It's actually starting to get to me.

The truth tends to slip out of people's mouths, you know.

You'd better be careful next time you're out walking at night.

No need to worry, I'm nocturnal.

And I guess— cats are, too.

A cat that exposes the heart of the matter—huh.

I don't know if there could be an aberration any more suited for Hanekawa...

But I wonder if she remembers...

Since we got here...

...I've been wondering...

...?!

...is something she's *already heard before.*

...that Oshino's explanation right now...

Where'd Shinobu go off to?

I spotted a vampire girl here yesterday.

There's also that talk I had with Hachikuji this afternoon.

I should probably run it by Oshino.

She's normally around the entrance or in this room.

What was she called now...

Miss Shinobu Oshino?

What?

I've never been intro-

She saw

Noth-
ing.

What's the matter, Araragi?

BLUP

DASH

OSHINO ?!!

Whoa, there.

This girl never lets her guard down. I was having a real hard time finding an opening.

FWOO

Not bad at all, Araragi.

I can't afford to let my own guard down here. And you've learned a number of lessons too, it seems.

This method is heterodox in its own way, but this is her we're dealing with.

But I managed, thanks to you distracting her.

Remember what I said? Not much time. So let's make this quick.

That goes for me— and for Missy Class President.

I guess!

It did disap-pear.

I thought we got rid of this "cat" already...

...

Why—is this flaring up again for her?

After all, she came here with you because she couldn't remember it—right?

It's still sealed away.

Even now.

It isn't that she remembered it—

She reconstructed it—the aberration.

She reconstructed an aberration like she was recovering lost data?!

Impossi-ble.

I didn't even think a human was capable of that...

No, maybe not. I'd be one thing...

She picked up on the changes as well as the speech and behavior of those around her,

gathering tiny fragments of information and connecting them together.

From there, she deduced the vital yet missing words,

analyzing and correcting each little bit like some kind of supercomputer.

And *that cat*—the one with a pair of mismatched wings.

...but we're dealing... with Hanekawa.

スカ…

FSSH

KLANK

GRRK

Look, Araragi. The sex-obsessed cat has made her appearance.

GRRRRKK

GRK

But we're not going to make that mistake again.

She even took me by surprise last time around.

I suggest you prepare yourself.

GRRRR

Mya-ha-ha!

Hu-
man.

What a
surpurrrise.
I never
thought
we'd meet
again—

CROUCH
DOWN,
HUMAN!

I CAN'T
SEE YA
WITH THESE
BREASTS IN
THE WAY!

...

I JUST
GOTTA
TURN
AROUND!

OH!
I
NYOH!

...

That's right...
it was
going to.

A special day.
The day
my hell
would end.

Tuesday,
June 13.

You're so purrsistent, ya bad little tomcat.

Getting aroused by my myaster's breasts.

TRYING TO GET YOURSELF EATEN ALIVE?

It marked the second coming of Black Hanekawa.

Been a minute.

...Hey.

A brief outburst that succinctly conveyed her character traits and positioning—

Cat

An aberration.

All it takes is a flick—for it to afflict you.

The "Afflicting Cat."

Cat

...There are some things better left...

...un-touched.

Just like this "cat" told me—*back* during Golden Week...

TWITCH

TWITCH

AGH!

Some things better left...

...un-known.

Ado-
ration
on a
whim,

disil-
lusion-
ment
on a
whim.
You're
better
off...

...not
knowing
any-
thing.
That
way,
you
don't
have to
see the
results.

Expec-
tations
on a
whim,
disap-
point-
ment
on a
whim.

Love
on a
whim,
hatred
on a
whim.

What
does
trying
to
learn
every-
thing
get
you?

BADMP

From the moment Hanekawa started getting headaches—

I already knew what was going to happen.

Ah!

Ow ...!!

Yes. ...I'm fine.

This kind of thing should go away if I just head home and study.

THROB

From the moment Hanekawa asked me to come...

No.

I knew *this* would happen.

...o trou...
...subasa Hanekaw...
...gs and salutations,
...araragi. It is my
...ere hope that this
...essage finds you in
good health and fortune.
I am always extremely
grateful for your kind
consideration.
As for the topic of my
letter to you today,
Araragi, I realize t
a man of such fa
yourself is sur
a time like th
you to find
humbly h

Because I didn't want Hanekawa to know—

I pretended like I didn't know anything.

That's why.

Snail

is different in one fundamental way.

Crab

Because compared to Senjogahara's crab and Hachikuji's snail, this aberration—

...but it even attacks the attacker herself.

This "cat" wounds people.

The people it attacked are one thing...

It's an aberration that attacks humans.

Internal Medicine / Pediatrician
Tanaka Hospital

Right back at ya, Araragi.

That's rich coming from someone who barges in on a guy with a heap of trouble in tow.

YOU GOTTA PREPARE YOURSELF MENTALLY FOR HER!

THIS IS ALL WAY TOO SUDDEN!

COULD YOU LET ME KNOW BEFORE YOU DRAG THIS CAT OUT?!

AND C'MON, OSHINO!

SKRITCH

SKRITCH

Don't ya have something fur me here?

If nyot, I'm leaving.

Mrow?

BAM

If she gets out of here, all of Naoetsu will fall into a panic—just like it did *before*.

...can she be let outside of this abandoned building.

Under no circum-stances ...

M e e o w ♡

Mrow!

SHHNK

ZWOOP

ズズン
THWOOM
WE WON'T SURVIVE THE NEXT ONE, OSHINO!
ガラ ガラ
RATTLE RATTLE
KLINK / 10チ / 11チ KLINK.
11Oチ KLINK
Yeah, I know.
...Just about done.
SKRRK
SKRRK
SKRRK
SKRRK
There.
...was different from mine.
Oshino's idea...

WHOOSH

KLANGG

GRRCHT
GRRCHT

GRRCHT

KRUMBLE

KRUMBLE

SHINK

—But that doesn't apply here.

Cast it off, make them forget, and all's well and good.

After a human's bewitched by an aberration once... it becomes easier for it to happen again.

To make matters worse, everything about this cat— is abnormal.

Ultimately, Missy Class President is gonna have to recognize her problem here— before we can deal with it.

GRRRKK

Yes ...

That might— be true.

There are some things out there you simply can't deal with—even if you know about them.

But as long as she doesn't know, Hane-kawa will never...

...from this monster hiding inside of her.

...be able to so much as run away...

CHNNK

CHNNK

PWOOF

PTT

VWOOSH

SPLATCH

We're really just treating the symptoms here.

Well.

SPLATTER

GRRK

If we don't cut it out at the root...

...we won't be able to root this thing out.

GRRRKK

Well, I thought I'd learn from last time and not hold anything back, but...

Your final move, your ace up your sleeve...

H-Hold on a second! Isn't this move, like... like your Avan Strash or your Kame-hameha?!

...

Well, it's fine. I came out this time to go feral anyway.

WHISP

THMP

SPLAT

THD

Phew
...

W-Well, looks like we handled it pretty quick this time.

But don't you think... something's off, Oshino?

THD

The cause last time around must've been stress over her family— something that had been building for over a decade.

It's only been a month since then... Isn't that awfully soon?

What could possibly be stressing Hanekawa out to that degree...?

THE LUNK-HEAD?!

IF I HAD TO GUESS, I THINK THE ABERRATION KNOWN AS THE LUNK-HEAD IS PLAYING A PART HERE!

Gautier Meridian Circle
(France, 1903)
Aperture: 20 cm
Focal length: 310 cm
Refracting telescope
Total weight of telescope: Approx 800 kilograms

WH-WHAT'S THAT?! WHERE IS IT?!

One so dull that it's downright infuriating.

An aberration also known as the Nitwit.

Yes, denseness on this level could certainly be described as aberrant.

WAIT, SO IT'S NOT AN ABER-RATION? WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

I don't know...

...

...every-thing.

...

What...

Just what I know...

Huh.

...about Hanekawa, exactly?

...do I know...

I didn't know anything.

That is— until Golden Week.

Oh.

Howdy hooo, Araragi! Doing good?

Haha!
Wow, what a coincidence!

I was just thinking about how great it'd be if I ran into you!

...Howdy hooo, Hanekawa.

What've you been up to?

Not much! Doing good!

Hold on, let me go down there.

The first day of Golden Week.

...

It was—

?!

She approached me with a friendly little jog.

So, what're you doing here?

Don't you live pretty far from this area?

...If not for the gauze on her face,

it was like any other day with her.

I guess you could say...

...that this was our first mistake.

Oh.

Hm.

Mmh...

If I pretended not to notice a thing and just left...

This, it's...

You see.

Oh...

At the time,

Hanekawa would've been fine if I had just ignored it.

...

She was trying to forget about her painful wounds—and she did so *perfectly*, thanks to her efforts.

Hane-kawa is perfect, yes.

But that doesn't mean she never fails.

Ha-ha!

Well, um!

In that case,

I also failed, in that I made her remember.

That must be why she called out to me.

To the point that she really did forget without meaning to.

Hup!

...

...

Ngh!

?!!

Were black.

They.

How erotic ...

I was sure they'd be white—how could this be? I'd even say it was beyond my imagination.

I'd even call it a paradigm shift—how could this be?

There was nothing she could do about that.

Which is why I didn't want to see that painful gauze on her face, or her getting worried for my sake either.

GGKT

Even in this situation,

she wasn't thinking about herself—she was trying to think of what she could do to make me feel better.

She'd caused me to lose my bearings—

and that troubled her.

Hanekawa, someone barely ever at a loss for words, was struggling to figure out a way through this impossible situation.

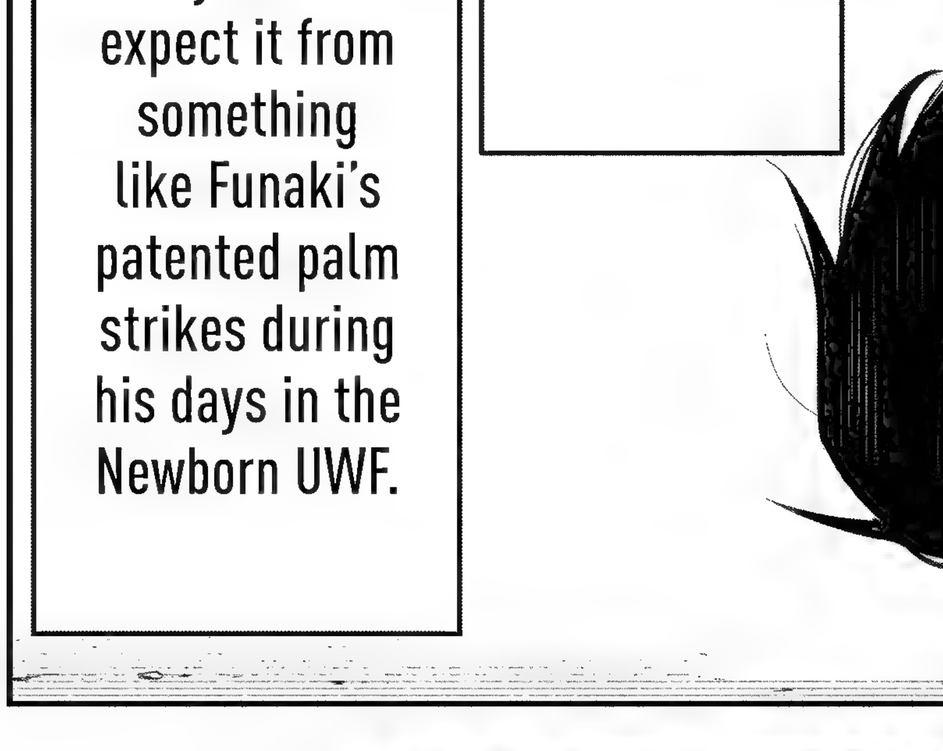
But I understood.

PWA

If anything, you'd expect it from something like Funaki's patented palm strikes during his days in the Newborn UWF.

It's hard to imagine a slap making that sound.

"Pwa-ggkt."



A truly eye-spinning, all too tidy and trim...

...miraculous, all-powerful, dark-black blow.

THUD

My life began to flash before my eyes.

praise be...

...aimed for my head as she brought down a crowbar, all because she thought she didn't stand out enough as a character.

Somehow, we found ourselves discussing the finer points of panties.

When was it? Oh, just this morning after I'd gone back to sleep. My youngest sister, Tsukihi...

I'd even say they aren't panties if they aren't white!

Panties should be white!

Yes! You said it!

There's nothing particularly sexy about black underwear, is there.

Hm?

I wanted to ask you a question, given all your romantic experience.

Hey, Tsukihi?

I, along with my sibling Tsukihi, ought to do some serious soul-searching.

But now that I've learned of this black aspect of Hanekawa's—

I keenly realize just how shallow I was then.

But I've realized that I'm always thinking about touching Miss H.'s chest.

Here's my question, though. You wouldn't want to touch the chest of someone you don't like, right?

I find Miss H.'s chest extremely attractive, and so I'd like to touch and fondle it.

Let's say there's a...Miss H. [...]

...ro-mance, isn't it?

This is...

It's not.

That's not romance, it's lust!!

Ko-yo-mi!

Ah!!

SPLAT

So kind.

You know, Araragi. You're...

...I like about you.

That's what...

Where should I start?

Okay, then.

I know. Once upon a time,

seventeen years ago, there was a cute girl.

A girl?

Think of her as a seventeen-year-old, the same as me.

One day, the girl found herself with child.

WI-WITH CHILD?!

ゆらら
SWAY

She didn't know who the father was.

Soon after giving birth,

she ended her own life.

She looked like a mobile.

Inside that crib was...

...me.

直江津本町
Naoetsu Hon-machi

But she got married right before she killed herself.

It seems like she was experiencing financial hardship.

It was for the money.

And this first dad of mine,

he was a textbook workaholic, serious and single-minded.

新田六丁目
Nita 6

But...

...he ended up working so hard it killed him.

Not someone who could raise a child, so he got remarried.

My current dad is the man she remarried.

That's it.

And...

...the mom he left behind, my second mom, is my current mom.

Birth Mother

Suicide

Birth Father

Unknown

Marriage

First Foster Father

Death by Overwork

Foster Mother

Marriage

Second Foster Father

Marriage

No blood relation

No blood relation

The present

Ignore

Ignore

Loveless marriage

The three of us are *just there* all under one roof—that's all.

We're a family on paper.

But our relationship is as cold as can be.

A402

—And so,

I don't have a father or a mother.

They're complete strangers.

That's why they were never able to put me in the system or get a divorce.

Those two— are just concerned about how they'd look.

Will you promise me something, Araragi?

Don't tell anyone about this.

—Maybe my mistake was thinking I could start making us a family after all this time.

I made a remark about some work my father brought home.

I mean, just think about it, Araragi.

KRAK

KRAK

You wouldn't blame yourself for getting a little upset— for losing your temper, don't you think?

If you were about forty—and some seventeen-year-old, *complete stranger* starts mouthing off to you like she knows it all?

That...

Araragi.

...

I mean,

I'm just venting at you.

...was mean of me, wasn't it?

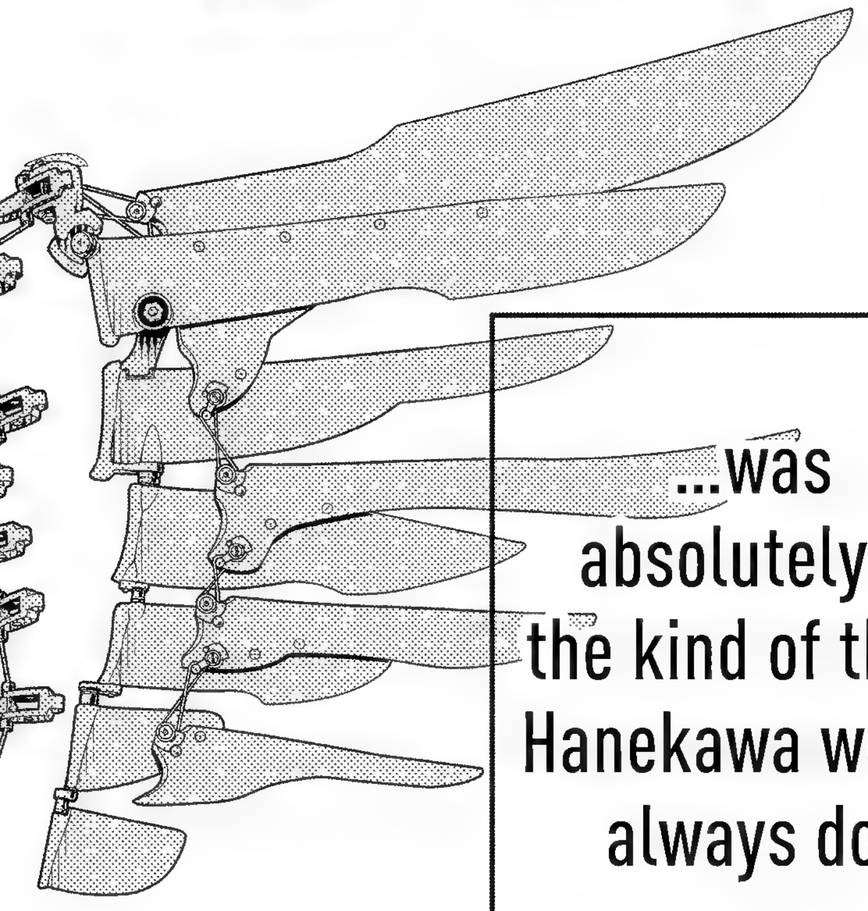
It's not like it has anything to do with you in the first place.

It's kind of like, "Okay, so what?"

You're probably wondering what you're supposed to say in a situation like this, right?

Thanks for letting me hit you with that.

I feel a little better now.



...was absolutely— the kind of thing Hanekawa would always do.

Saying that—

saying *something like this* without so much as hesitating...

she's just like she's always been.

As if she were a machine designed to do just that.

Not a single thing was different about her—

I wonder ...

What did I think...

...I really knew about Hanekawa?

HANEKAWA AUTOMATED CONVERSATION SYSTEM

...Or so I've heard.

Tsubasa

The word for "wings," but it can also mean "to help" or "to save."

"Tsu-basa."

But I wonder. What did Hanekawa's mother, who killed herself...

Shel-tering them.

Like a mother bird using her wings to protect her chicks.

...that was forced upon Hanekawa?

What was the role...

...have in mind when she gave her that name?

I used you to cheer me up.

—Hane-kawa...

...said.

Just as I intend-ed.

Don't you feel heavy-hearted now—like you just peeked into a friend's private affairs?

But then you felt guilty for pitying me when it didn't make sense to, right?

You felt a little pity for me.

I mean—isn't that what hap-pened?

…

…No, I…

…

…

Impeccable manners

There's no end to the words one could use to praise Hanekawa.

Prim and proper

Erudite and wise

But maybe it was all part of the *work she needed to do to overcome the role she was given*—by her mother.

I tried to feel better about myself—by making you feel bad.

I can't even call this griping.

Firm and

Stickler for the rules

Formal and upright

Grand and blameless

Serious and honest

This is just me trying to relieve my frustration.

...never felt regret, remorse, distaste, or dislike.

That she...

I'd thought she—never felt troubled or worried.

I...

...had misunder-stood—Hanekawa.

That it was only natural for her to be happy.

That she couldn't even be harmed.

...I'd found out.

But— now...

STILL!

WHAT-EVER... THE SITUATION MIGHT BE...

I'd come in contact with her heart.

With the *real* *Hanekawa*.

THAT'S— NOT ALL RIGHT!!!

"Wh-What can you *do about it*"?

Are you really saying that?

Isn't that the thing you'd find most unforgiv-able of all?

...

What can I do about it?

I think it's fine.

It was just once.

Wha...

What's ...

...with her?

I...

I'm me.

I can't blame someone for hitting me.

...with the family I'd ended up in after being tossed from one person to the next.

I used to think I'd do my best to get along...

That you can still be family even if you're not related by blood.

I used to believe it, you know.

Why are you still...

...trying to defend them?!

GRIT

Why?

Why say this—about *that* family?

About—*those* parents?

...the right thing to do at all...

Hane-kawa.

This isn't...

What's...

ZSSHH

...

...so hard to be daugh-terly.

All while I'm trying

...

she said.

And so I happened to think the wind sounded like those words.

That *I wanted her*— to say that.

Maybe it was the result of my desires.

Or maybe I misheard her.

I couldn't make her out very well.

They weren't her *acting properly*.

Those words weren't keeping up appear-ances.

After all.

Hanekawa's *true feelings*.

They felt like—

You're still hungry, aren't you, Dad? I'll get you another piece.

Heh heh! There's still lots of fried chicken left!

Who knew you'd be a great cook, too. You really are amazing!

This is delicious!

Well, I am a good teacher. Of course, Tsubasa's a quick learner, too! ♡

And it sounds like Tsubasa once again got the top score on the national mock exam! I'm so proud to have her as my daughter.

What do you think, Dear?

Thank you for the meal.

Even I'm surprised.

You're the first person I've ever told about this, of course.

...

You promised me—right?

How many *first times* are you going to snatch away from me?

Er.

No... That was...

There was the P.E. shed during spring break, too—it's one thing after another with you.

Right, Araragi?

You won't tell anyone.

You promised me.

Hane-
kawa...
I...ah...

...!

Not child services, not the police.

Not my school.

Not my sisters, not my parents—

...

Not anyone.

Ah...

...

...Er.

Don't ever...

...talk about this again, she said.

Please, Araragi.

And—

not even Hane-kawa herself.

How am I supposed to keep... a promise like that?

B-But... this really isn't right.

That— is what Hanekawa told me.

Please don't tell anyone about this.

...do anything.

If you do stay quiet...

I'll...

WHAT ?!

WAIT, YOU'LL DO ANYTHING ?!!

FOR REAL ?!!

CHOMP

I bit.

She said it!

AWWRIIIGHT!!!

Hanekawa will do anything for me!!!

And all I have to do is stay quiet?!!

Tsubasa Hane-kawa!

The Hane-kawa ?!

DON'T GET TOO WORKED UP, IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS WHEN YOU NEED TO PLAY IT COOL! BE DIGNIFIED!! THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFE-TIME CHANCE! YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT!

OH MAN, WHAT SHOULD IT BE? WHAT SHOULD I HAVE HER DO, WHAT SHOULD I HAVE HER DO? WHAT'S THE BEST THING I COULD HAVE HER DO? WAIT, NO. HOLD ON, ARARAGI!

Throw that to the cats!

Is that how this scene goes? I thought you'd be impressed by how serious I am and reluctantly promise to keep your silence.

That's... how you're going to react?

Wh—

What?!

DUNNO WHAT YOU MEAN!!

HOW SERIOUS YOU ARE?!

Seriousness Out

Hey, Araragi? Do you remember all that really serious stuff we were just talking about?

Damn, I hate how indecisive I am. It would be so manly if I could answer on the spot...

...No, I think that would make you the worst man ever...

PACE

PACE

Anything, huh? I don't know how to reply to that, though...

PACE

PACE

PACE

...

I'm starting to get a head-ache...

I didn't expect this turn of events...

Who's Araragi?

You've even forgotten your own name...

I don't!

You don't...

The line she'd spoken was the only thing I needed to remember.

who cared about me? I was just chopped liver.

While I was happy she was this shocked at me forgetting my own name,

That's right! Her line just now, "Missus Hanekawa's gonna do anything Araragi begs for☆"!

I NEVER SAID THAT!!!

WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU CONSID-ERING ?!

OH, SORRY! I WAS WONDERING WHAT IT'D BE LIKE IF I HAD YOU ROLEPLAY AS A TEACHER, AND IT JUST SLIPPED OUT OF MY MOUTH!

WHO'S MISSUS HANE-KAWA?!

She's mad!

But that won't affect me!

Hold on a second! I just realized that you didn't put a limit on the number of requests! Doesn't that mean you've agreed to grant an unlimited number of wishes?!

YOU GET ONE!!!

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

RUSTLE RUSTLE

I brought Hanekawa to some nearby bushes.

But that didn't matter to me right now!!!

As if the distance between our hearts was even greater.

She stood at a bit of a distance from me.

...

What exactly was it that you said?

Just now.

Um, Hane-kawa?

I'll do anything...

If you stay quiet,

...

NO! THE THING YOU SAID AFTER THAT!

...Don't tell anyone about this, please.

Is it just me, or did I hear the sound of someone slamming a volume of manga shut?

...I may be imagining things, but is it that Hanekawa's not the only one looking at me with disdain here?

By now, her scowl had turned into what you could call a withering glare.

...

SORRY, I COULDN'T HEAR YOU VERY WELL THANKS TO ELECTRO-MAGNETIC INTERFER-ENCE FROM SPACE!

COULD YOU REPEAT THE SECOND HALF ONE MORE TIME?!

I'll do anything.

...

Her tone couldn't be any flatter.

...

Put a little more feeling into it, please.

Think of that flat delivery as containing all of the feelings I harbor for you right now.

...Okay.

Is—— ...

Strip? Down to what?

What should I do?

So? Now what, Araragi?

...What's going on, Hanekawa...? You seem awfully composed.

Because when it really comes down to it, you'll get scared and do nothing in the end.

I am.

LIRK!

How about facing me when you talk?

You ought to look someone in the eyes when you talk to them, Araragi.

Hold on, Miss Hanekawa.

This great challenge I now face is going to be where I show her just how much of a man I am!

What an insult!

Me, scared?!

...

...

In the P.E. shed.

Spring break.

When exactly have I ever been scared?

Even someone who'd never seen poultry before could have taken one look at you and more or less figured out what sort of animal it is.

C'MON C'MON

FLAP

I remember it like yesterday— you acting like the big chicken you were.

FLAP

...

PHEW

SNICKER

クスッ

...

PACE

PACE

CHIKN

CHIKN

Y-You're dripping with more sarcasm than usual...

...

ぴろ。

FLASH

But she's dead wrong if she thinks all chickens stay chickens!

Yes, I was a chicken over spring break. I admit that.

I'm taking this on to make up for all the face I lost over spring break.

...It seems that you have an extremely low estimation of my manliness...

...Hm? Wait, then I'd still be a chicken...

Just as a baby chick will grow into a rooster in time, I, too—

...

Shouldn't they be a little pickier?

Still, the gods are merciful to give someone like me an opportunity to avenge myself.

C'MON C'MON

...are you unable to come up with anything?

Or...

TUG TUG

BLUP BLUP

What's gotten into you? You're acting awfully pompous.

TURN

Hane-kawa...

Hmph.

?!!

SNAP

BOING

WISH

...

...Mh!

Is this a show of her courage? Or is this just how certain she is that I'm a total chicken?

Impressive, Hanekawa... So you're offering yourself to me from behind ...?

Must be the latter.

JIGGLE ぷる

JIGGLE ぷる

BLOOP ぷるん

...

SHHK
SHHK
SHHK
Eek!
Your provocative attitude has given me a clue—
That's right.
I was so focused on the thought of having you "do anything" for me...
SHHK
SHHK
...that I didn't realize the opposite was true, too. The true solution...
SHHK
...in terms of your offer—

BA-BA-BA-BAM

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

JOLT

THKK

Wha...

TH-THMP

TH-THMP

TH-THMP

TH-THMP

TH-THMP

...

...!

HAAH

HAAH

Um... In other words, Hane-kawa...

M-Must've been a cat.

...

Yes?

...did something to you?

What if I...

Instead of getting you to do something for me—

I know you won't do anything anyway.

...

G—

Go ahead.

...

Do as you please...

SST

TWITCH

I want to lick the wound under that gauze.

...

—And so,

That was the deal.

My blood, saliva, or whatever else—has unbelievable healing powers due to my vampirism.

Though the ability had degraded after becoming a mockery of a human—at the peak of my powers, I was even able to heal Hanekawa's organs after they'd been sent flying.

I think it's about time.

It was the same—as *back then*.

Oh.

But for some-thing like this, *I just needed to lick it...*

...to heal it.

Wow. This is really handy— I think my skin is *even* glowing more than usual.

You'd be a millionaire if you sold this stuff as toner, you know.

But... how do I put it...

Still, put the gauze on before going home.

It'd seem weird if your wound healed all of a sudden.

I realized you knew exactly what I was planning ...

That I wanted to cheer you up, and so you decided to play along, but...

I guess.

Oh, really?

So you didn't actually see them. Too bad for you! ♡

Next time, in that case.

NO, WAIT, REALLY! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!

Thank you, Araragi.

A look at my panties and breasts isn't nearly enough to pay you back for this, is it?

No! It's plenty!

AND WAIT, YOUR BREASTS?!

What do you mean?!

Thanks for the donuts.

...

Want me to escort you home?

Is she going to show me her breasts the next time she asks for a favor?

What does that mean?

...

Enjoy those with Mister Oshino, okay?

No. It's fine.

You're my hero, Araragi.

But I can't find it in me...

...to agree.

Hane-kawa did say that ...

...when we parted ways.

...

...There's nothing I can do about them.

Hanekawa's issues at home—are beyond me.

死
Death
死
Death
Death
Death

Death

That night...

Meow.

Fwaah!

FWAAAH

ふあああ

Meow.

WAAAH

...and before day broke, a spree of assaults took place in the town of Naoetsu.

...were unconscious and in critical condition. They were sent to the hospital ...

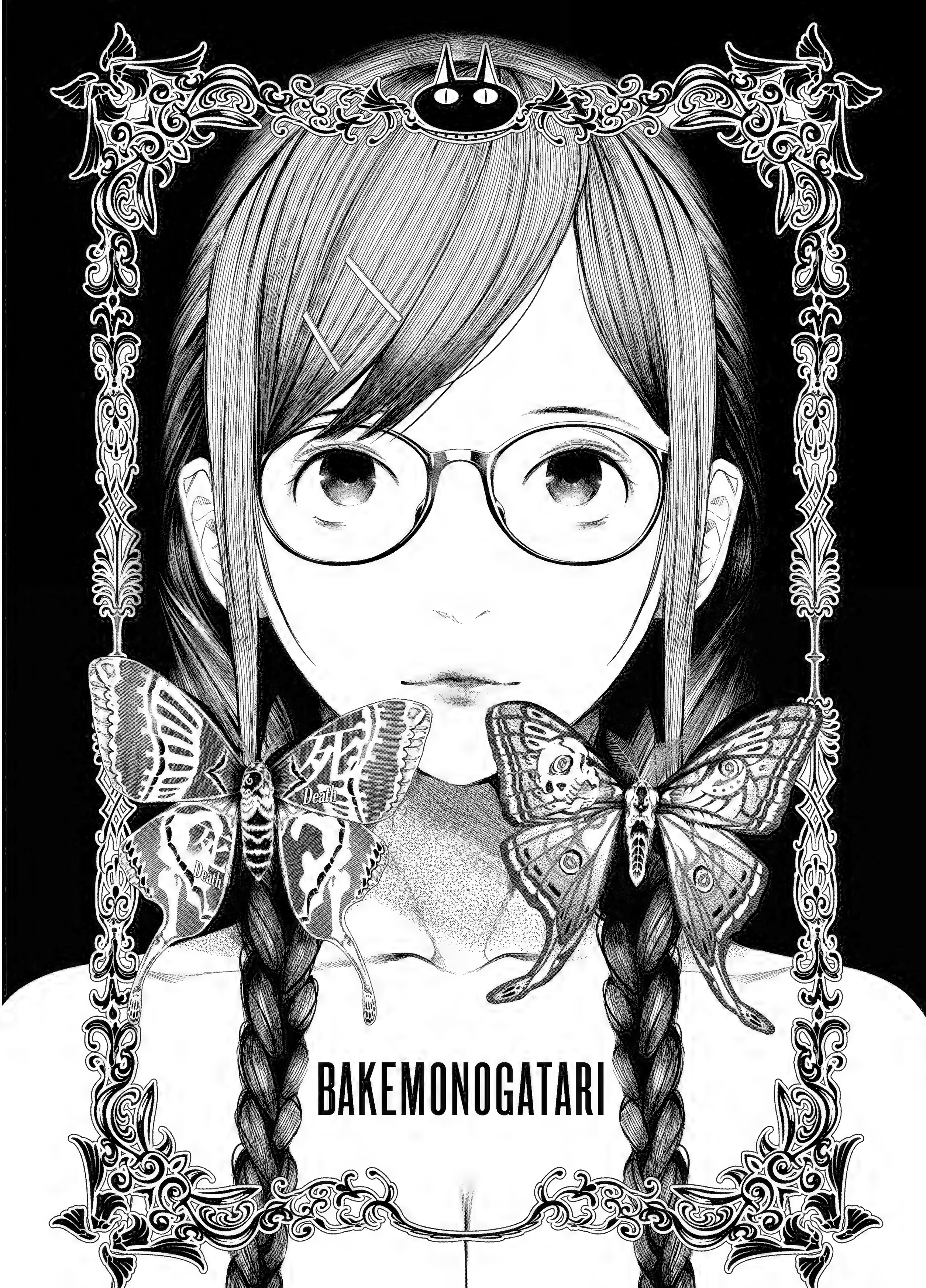
136 direct victims. Two among them...

MonsterDonuts

...that very same night.

In other words, before day broke on April 30.

With the donuts I'd received from Hanekawa in hand, I went to the abandoned cram school to give my blood to *her*.



BAKEMONOGATARI

She's refused to talk to me ever since spring break.

Okay, might as well get started.

GRRCH

...

Of course, that's only natural when you consider what I did to her.

...? What is it?

SNIFF SNIFF

...?!

SNIFF

SNIFF

SNIFF

SNIFF

SNIFF

TWITCH

TWITCH

DROOOL

SCURRY

SCURRY

SCURRY

SCURRY

SCURRY

Monster Donuts

WHOA!

PSSHT

BAM

ZHM

BWOOF

HOOOH

HOOOH

HOOOH

INCH

INCH

INCH

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

WH—

Will it upset her stom-ach?

—And wait, can vampires consume anything other than blood ?

D-Does she want these donuts ?

...

...

...!

TWITCH

TWITCH

TIC

TIC

Umm... Stay. Sit.

TWITCH

I-I guess I'll try giving her one...

WHA
...?!!

PTT

KRUMBLE
ガシャ

KRUMBLE
ガシャ

KRUMBLE
ガシャ

—What is that sound?

It's like... something crumbling inside of me.

Good girl...?

Umm...

You—

You don't have... to beg, you know.

FOR REALS?

THESE HALO-SHAPED TREATS ARE SO DELISH! 'TIS NOTHING SHORT OF A CHEST OF GEMSTONES HOLDING THE SWEETEST OF RINGS!

CHOMP

CHOMP

CHOMP

WHAT KIND OF A STORY-RUINING TWIST IS THIS?! OH, I KNOW WHAT THIS IS! I'M HEARING THINGS! PHEW, YOU SCARED ME THERE! LAAA-LAAA-LAAA!

DID YOU JUST TALK ?!

Don't bully her too much, Araragi.

CHOMP CHOMP CHOMP

I think treating a young girl like a dog more than qualifies as abuse.

I'm not bullying her.

...

Think I'll help myself to one. Old-fashioneds are my favorite.

Oshino !

Whoa !

All aberrations are made up of human beliefs, you know.

Aber-rations manifest as they're recognized by those around them.

And they behave as those around them expect them to.

It's because everyone thinks they are.

Do you know why vampires ...

...are the strong-est of all aberra-tions?

MUNCH

MUNCH

MUNCH

No.

There's — no way.

...like this now because that's what I'm thinking?

So you're saying that she's...

...?

Even children have expectations of their parents— after all.

A child doesn't always turn out the way his parents want them to, right?

...it can even give rise to a dreadful monster.

If these expectations don't mesh well— if they're out of line with one another ...

...

For some reason,

it felt as though—Oshino was talking about Hanekawa.

...

"All while I'm trying so hard to be daughterly."

In order to get closer to her parents, who weren't related to her by blood—

in order to *live up to their expectations*, Hanekawa...

...is trying that hard to always be a perfect, flawless, "good girl."

Isn't that—what's going on here?

Not that I'd be able to criticize any answer you give, even if you flirted with her, flipped her skirt, and leered at her body so hard you might as well have been licking her from head to toe.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW, OSHINO?!

Just as long as she's doing well.

Huh ?!

BURP

Anyway, Araragi. How's Missy Class President doing? What were you up to today?

Well, it's not like I can tell him about her private life.

...asking about Hanekawa like this...

Oshino keeps...

Yeah... She's fine...

...

Impartial

Serious and honest

Stickler for the rules

Circuit

Formal and upright

Grand and blameless

It was as if—she was a robot, flipping switches inside of herself to be the most appropriate person for the situation...

—But I don't know about Hanekawa. Not anymore.

Which Hanekawa is the real one?

Erudite

Prim and proper

That goes without saying.

You can say that about everyone.

You're also the same way, Araragi.

Mmh ...

But ...

...always goes without saying, Araragi.

Only a select few can make sure that what goes without saying...

Hanekawa tried to do that today.

Act like everything was the same as always.

In that moment—
the right answer
would have been
to pretend not to
see me.

If she was
the same
Hanekawa
as always—
that is.

But it
looked to
me like—

she
couldn't.

Haha!
Wow, what a
coincidence!

I was just
thinking
about how
great it'd be
if I ran into
you!

I believe
she was
the real
Hanekawa.

the Hanekawa
who looked
happy from
the bottom
of her
heart—

But *the*
person I
saw that
day—

Nor-
mally
...

...it...

Hane-
kawa
?

...wouldn't have registered to me as Hanekawa.

I could never forget panties as beautiful as those—and so I was certain that *it* was Hanekawa.

But it was so black—to the point of being conspicuous. Extremely black. A dark black that seemed to suck you in.

...my myaster's friend?

Are you...

Mrow ?

Hane ...!

PWING

ZIP

THUD

ROLL

ROLL

ROLL

What ...?

GHH

...

DRIP

DRIP

DRIP

Gya-aaha-haha-ha!

An hour earlier.

Aftercare, basically—for your big spring break screw-up.

This is part of the job.

It was almost as if—*Oshino was telling me that watching Hanekawa was my job.*

But...

Then, in an uncharacteristic move, he listened quietly as I rambled on about my relationship with Hanekawa.

Araragi. This wasn't...

...a silver cat with no tail, was it?

Yes, it really was *no different for me.*

I already had a bad feeling—from back then.

Back when...

...Hanekawa buried that run-over cat.

TWITCH

I'm going to check up on the cat. You go see how she's doing.

Chances are nine out of ten nothing's happened, but Missy Class President is involved here.

THNK

I have to wonder.

How many people would cradle a cat that had been run over multiple times in their arms?

...I... can't really recall?

But it's not like that, Oshino.

This was just a regular, plain cat.

So I didn't really remember *what kind of cat* it was.

It made me start feeling anxious.

To be honest, I wasn't moved by her affection so much as, well...

I just want to be careful. If it's nothing, then it's nothing—

You have a rough idea, don't you?

I don't even know where she lives!

Go to her house?! At this hour?!

THP

...Urgh...

KLANG

Don't make such a fuss, human.

That kind of pain is like a meowsquito bite compared to what my myaster has put up with fur all this time.

I happened across *this cat*.

And so—

That's when.

Pain
Pain
Pain

Nyot even worth killing. Nyot even worth tormenting. Totally worthless.

So, friend, you take care of these two who hurt my myaster as you see fit.

I guess that means these are people she *doesn't need.*

BRRIP

GRRT

I don't get it, but friends are supposed to help each other out, right?

Wai —

Wait, Hanekawa!

Why should I have to listen to every little thing ya want?!

STOP

SNATCH

"Wait"?

Is that what you said?

...

KLONG

STOP

KLANG

KRAK

KRAK

STOP

It's because of *people like you*— that my myaster ended up like this!

GSSHT

GSSHT

My myaster to do!

Stop expect-ing!

GSSHT

GSSHT

Every little thing ya want, ya dumbass!

Wai...

BAM

Wait
...

WHHMP

CAT
!

ZHMP

?!!

IF
YOU'RE...
THE CAT
FROM—
THAT
DAY.

LEAVE
HANE-
KAWA'S
!

POS-
SESS
MY
BODY!

My head feels heavy—like there's something on top of it...

I can't see a thing...

Dammit... I can barely stay conscious... She even got my eyes?

BLUSH

Ah!

...!

JOLT

JOLT

FSSHH

TWITCH

TWITCH

I WAS THERE TOO... WHEN SHE BURIED YOU!

DO YOU REMEMBER, CAT?!

Eek!

BVVFT

TWITCH

ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME, CAT?!

Could this be the endorphin rush they say you get when you're on the verge of death?!

I'm starting to feel really happy just about now...

Dammit, why...?! I don't understand, but...

IF WE DID SOMETHING— TO *AFFLICT* YOU—THEN CURSE ME FOR IT!

MEOW

TWITCH

AAHH

SKRRK

THP

THP

THMP

SPLAT

So she doesn't nyeed you. She doesn't nyeed anyone else.

My myastyer has me now.

She doesn't even nyeed...

...herself.

Death

...she'd grown wings.

It was almost like...

THMP

...

Hello ?

Do you have a crime to report?

Or is it an accident?

Hanekawa...

...was *free* now.

Ah... ambulances ...

As many... as you can get...

From Hanekawa's perspective, these parents deserve nothing but blame.

And— why was it?

...they somehow looked so much like victims.

But to me...

...

...

Why aren't you wearing panties?

You.

I somehow managed to make it back here on my bike.

—

Oh... right.

My arm!

...Huh?!

Ah, wuh?!

PLAT ペた

PLAT ペた

THUNK コト

KLANG

You're up, Araragi?

Well, aren't you mister sleepy-head. I've been waiting for ages.

I just lost, that's all.

O...Oshino?!? What happened? Why are you hurt?!

Nothing special...

NAOE

She kinda got the jump on me.

But well, that means Missy Class President is still there on the inside.

Huh ?!

I dragged you into this job of mine.

Sorry, Araragi. I'm a failure as a balancer.

I feel like I need to apologize to your parents.

The damage you took was in large part due to my oversight.

We gotta cast out this Afflicting Cat or whatever it is.

Anyway, we need to do something about Hanekawa ASAP.

St—

Stop it, Oshino.

This is nothing ...

Heh heh...

We're done for if she gets completely taken over.

...It seems like Missy Class President's consciousness is still in there somewhere.

Well, if anything, you have just one important task that you can do, and that's staying out of my way.

Araragi. From here on out—there isn't a thing you can do.

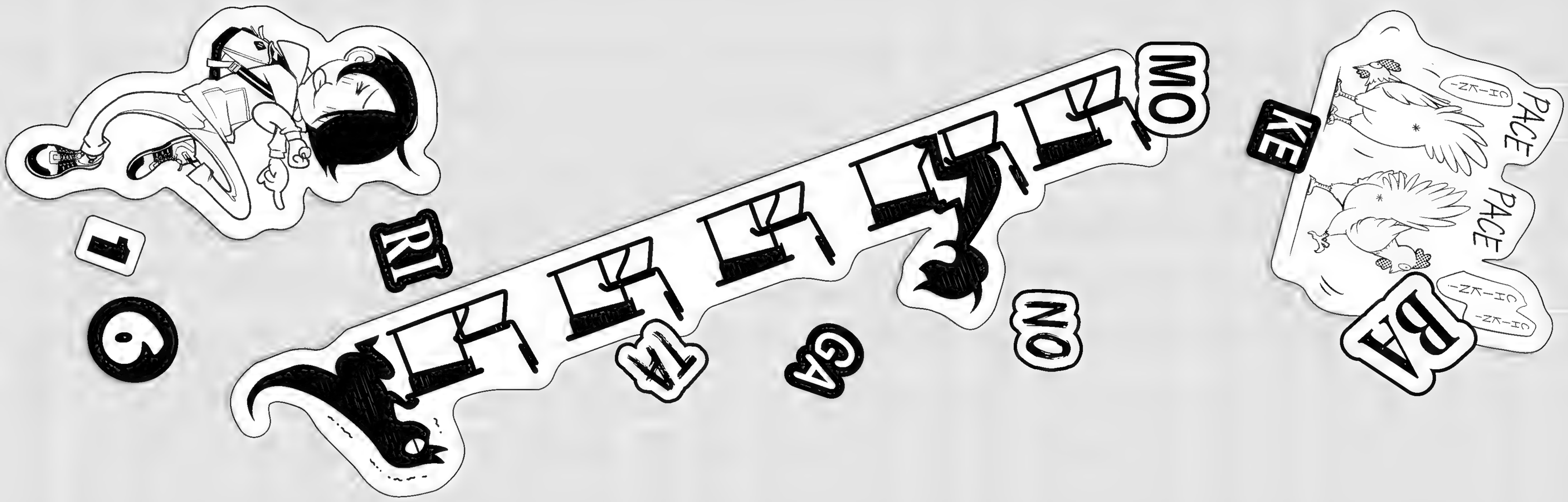
We'd just have to kill her then.

The first of May isn't a holiday during Golden Week.

It's a regular weekday for high school students.

So...

Hanekawa didn't come to school.


PACE
PACE
BA
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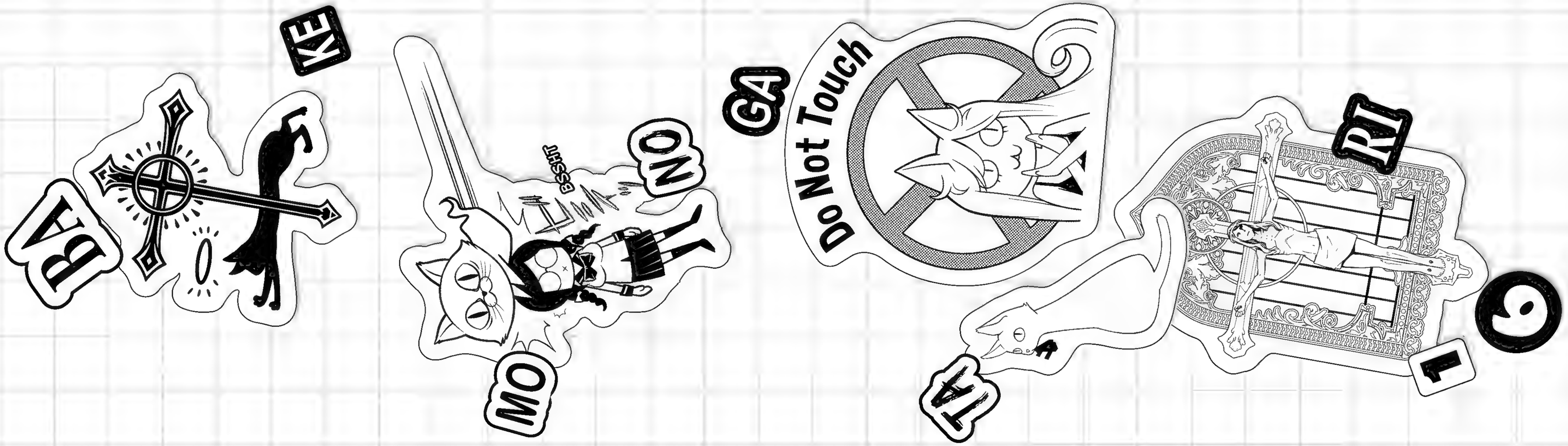
KE
BA
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NO
GA
Do Not Touch
TA
RI
O
T

Are there really things in the world that you're better off not knowing?

I don't know.

selfishly hating them, selfishly feeling disappointed by them, and selfishly feeling disillusioned by them...

If it meant selfishly deciding to love someone, selfishly counting on them, selfishly admiring them,

...then maybe...

...I shouldn't have gotten so involved in Hanekawa's business after all.

I'm just a friend. What is there— that I can do?

It's not a question of feelings, it's a question of technique.

That's what Oshino told me, but it's past that now.

I'd been rejected.

By Oshino? No, by Hanekawa.

It steals their power.

The Afflicting Cat...

...harms only those that *come in contact with it.*

THD ドド

THD ドド

THD ドド

THD ドド

THD ドド。。

MRROW

MEOW

MEOW

MEOW

MEOW

MEOW

MEOW

MEOW

And when she hit me with the stop sign instead, I could heal right away—like normal.

...it stole—*my im-mortality itself.*

So when the cat sliced my arm off...

Mrow mrow

What's this?

When did you...?!

That book is my—

BWOOF

MYAA HAHA HA

The Afflicting Cat is a small fry.

HOOONK

BEEP

BEEP

BEEP

HOOONK

A low-level aberration that even an amateur could handle.

Nothing compared to a vampire. It would be conceited to so much as compare the two.

That, according to Oshino, is the standard teaching among experts.

...she could repel every way to deal with an aberration using expert-level knowledge.

Using her strategies and mastery of complex tactics...

Her fearsome mind and spirit...

...twisted even the cat's nature as an aberration.

...and *pulled that cat up* to the level of just about the strongest of aberrations.

This human, Hanekawa, had taken what should have been a small fry...

But Tsubasa Hanekawa...

... knows everything.

The more she tried to look right and proper...

No matter how good and *right* she looked—no...

...the more that dark and disgusting stress built up inside of her like sediment.

That's what Oshino said.

Never let a cat's appear-ance fool you.

I can see the depths of that hell—but there's nothing I can do about it.

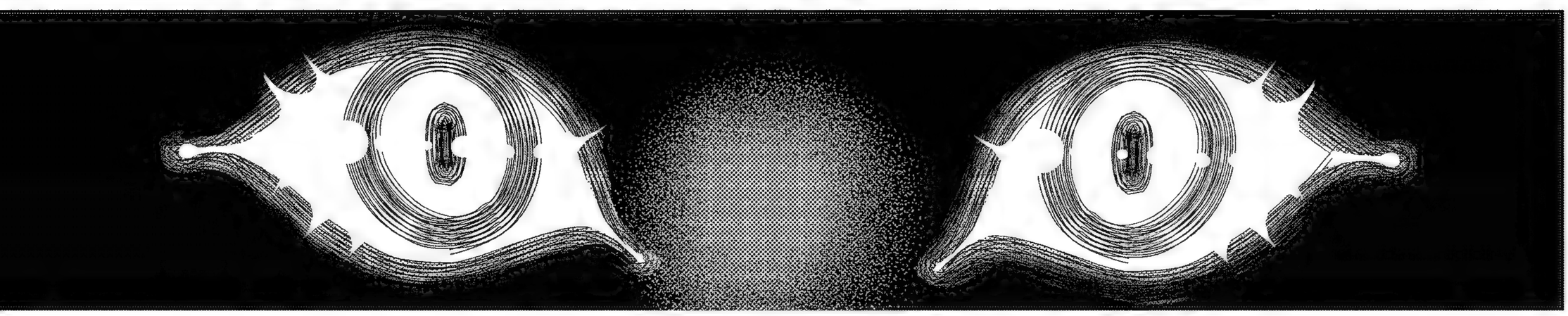
Nothing aside from rub my cheek on her desk like this.

Now I know about the darkness within her.

れろ
LICK

That glorious chest of hers pressed against this and—

Hanekawa would normally be sitting here.



ヒョコ
JOLT

...!

...Are you some kind of purrvert of the highest order?

That's what this is.

NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS!

N...

You were just licking a girl's desk and getting all excited about it...

You scare me more than any meow-berration.

You scare me...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! WHERE'S OSHINO?!

I-I-I'LL TAKE THIS TO COURT! I WON'T ADMIT A THING! WHO CARES, ANYWAY!

BAM

Whatever. I'm here to tell you something—about that Hawaiian-shirt guy.

Who cares? What in the world could be bigger than you running your tongue all over my myaster's desk?

Huh ?

I'm clearly stronger than him. I could kill him *just like that* if I really try. Tell him that if you really want to save my myaster, just leave it to me.

Meow !

...

You're just attacking anyone that crosses paths with you.

I don't understand what you're even saying.

Save her ...?

It's nyot like me to do this kind of thing—

is it.

I nyoh...just how my master spent those fifteen years in that home.

Diary

November 8
Good teeth day
I had fun today.

November 9
Tapioca day
I had fun today.

November 10
Good friends day
I had fun today.

Ugh!

BSSHT

As an aberration that possesses people, I share my myaster's brain.

That's why I nyoh how she *really* feels.

Feb

fun today.

Fe

Every day in her journal was the same cookie-cutter line. They all said, "I had fun today."

August 18

today.

In *that* house. In *that* family. Do you nyoh just how much pressure was coming down on my myaster?

That... couldn't be true.

She had fun.

I do.

Yeah.

...

Oshino said I shouldn't do anything.

But I thought there was something, however small...

...that I could do to help solve this.

And so...

...I snuck into Hanekawa's house the other day.

I started by looking for Hanekawa's room.

It was bigger and nicer than I imagined.

Almost too big for a family of three, even.

There were a lot of rooms, but a number of them were empty.

I looked.

And I looked—until...

No.

Not because I found anything in particular.

I threw up—

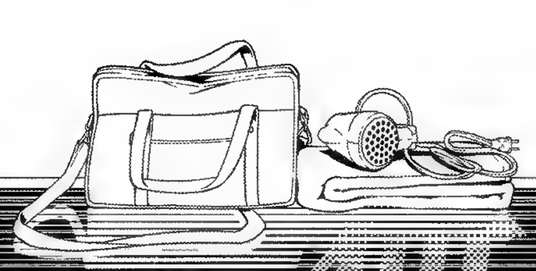
because I didn't find anything.

It was the opposite.

I threw up.

What I found, at last, was a neatly folded blanket, a bag with underwear inside, a school uniform, a hairdryer, and a phone charger in the corner of a hall.

Forget Hanekawa's room—there weren't even signs that she lived there in that big house.



Nothing

That was all.

—And *that's why...you're going to release* fifteen years of her stored-up stress?

Is this you repaying her for the burial?

I've heard that cats have a surprisingly strong sense of loyalty.

...

That day...

Nyo, that's where you're wrong.

Hmm...

...my myaster didn't feel any sympathy at all for me, or the slightest bit sorry.

Nyot even a shred of kindness or murrcy.

Didn't I tell you?

—See?

That was the right thing to do—that's all.

Act sad and cry.

Bury a cat's corpse.

One with laws, or maybe formewlas.

Like a machine.

I'm not that good of a person.

If you came to know the real me, Araragi, I bet you'd feel disillusioned.

—That's what she said.

So you can stop now.

So, on a whim, I felt like *saving her* a little.

That type of person is a curiosity to me.

...Catty of me, isn't it?

...If we do leave you alone... what guarantee do we have that Hanekawa will turn back to normal?

Tell him he's just dragging me down.

My myaster will be done releasing her stress—if I attack another 500 people. So keep that Hawaiian-shirt guy out of my way.

...Did you turn back to nyormal?

Vam-pire.

The only right answer is to be complete strangers.

Lay not a finger, or risk mortal danger.

You'll be cursed in a flick, then it'll all be over like that.

Stay away. Don't you touch the Afflicting Cat.

can You stop now.

Fare-well!

Have a good life.

Bye-bye, Araragi.

Stay away.
Don't you
touch the
Afflicting Cat.

Meow.

BAKEMONOGATARI

Have a
good life.

化け bake

monogatari 物語

Aahh
...

HAAAHH.

...It's no good.

BOOM

There's no way I can catch up...

No matter what I do... I can't reach her.

THP

THP

THWOOM

I really do...

...love Hanekawa.

Do Not Touch

I can't lay a single finger on her.

That "cat" didn't have to tell me.

I love her so much...

...I dare not even touch her...

Not because of what happened over spring break.
Not out of any gratitude I feel over being saved.
Not because she's pretty.
Not out of pity.

I just love her.

There wasn't any reason at all.

I've decided.

I think I love her. I feel I love her.

So I know I love her.

...

It really is just as Tsukihi said.

...I made this decision a long time ago.

No, I think...

My feelings for Hanekawa had gotten so out of control...

...

RUB スリ

RUB スリ

I love her so much I can't stand it—

But these feelings aren't romance.

It was some-thing decided, unmoving.

I'd only now realized it.

You know.

I guess we do have an extra desk...

...that they'd gone ...

... beyond ro-mance.

...I feel like I want to die for her.

I mean...

I'll hide it in the abandoned cram school to show it regular admiration...

Because...

...that's what Hanekawa wants.

So,
Araragi...

Like solitude is my friend now?

Haha! It's actually *gone beyond* feeling lonely and stuff.

Yeah. It means I'm all alone. Even when I'm at home.

I'm not alone.

You're right.

Sorry, Araragi.

That's true.

What?

...Oh. Yeah.

I have a real friend, don't I?

MonsterDonuts

And then— after that...

...I spent the next five full days...

...on my hands and knees.

...exclu-sively...

I wouldn't call someone a friend if I wasn't ready to die for them.

...and not raising my head a single time.

Not eating, not drinking, skipping Saturday classes, sitting stock still, staying up...

The whole time.

You know.

Happens all the time.

OFFICIAL 25 YD

MonsterDonuts

MonsterDonuts

KRAK

BWOOF

FSSHT

GRRRRNK

SGRUNCH

HOOOH

HOOOH

HOOOH

SPLATCH

GRIND

GRIND

I'd just die, and it'd be over.

How could I win?

Even Oshino couldn't beat this "cat."

…

HEH…

SKRRK

SHHK

SHHK

SGRRCH

TWITCH

AH!

AAH!

TWITCH

ZWOOSH

TOSS

KLANG

KLANG

CLANG

—TH-
THANK
YOU!

But as your friend, there are three things I want to warn you about.

No point in telling you not to stick your neck into this business now. Bet you'd be doing this even if you lost your neck...

But we're dealing with Missy Class President here.

Even I'll admit it.

Your idea here does indeed look like the best one to me.

it'll be the one she's on highest alert for and most prepared against—that's what you want to tell me, right?

And because this best plan—is one that someone of my caliber could devise,

...No, it's fine. I take it back.

There's no point in mentioning it.

Well, yes.

On to number two, then...

...

...as to what he was about to say.

I had a pretty good guess...

Normally, I'd think some-thing like, "What's up with that?" —but not this time.

...I appreciate you not saying it.

So right now...

I know that, Oshino.

There's a difference between risking your life and throwing your life away, Araragi—

What's more—for your plan to work, you need *her to be the one who comes to you.*

Realistically speaking, how are you going to find her when you have no idea where she could be hiding in this town?

Last one.

...huh.

When the cat left the classroom—I saw her putting away a certain something.

Guess she'd been hiding it somewhere...

My plan...

...That one's not a problem.

It's a four-dimensional pocket stuffed with all kinds of useful tools.

...are contained within Hane-kawa's chest.

My hopes and my dreams ...

A thought that it'd be nice if things went a certain way.

It was just an expec-tation.

My idea—isn't something you could call a plan.

ﾌﾞﾙﾙﾙ

People—
just go and
get saved
on their
own—

right
?

I don't
want
to save
Hanekawa.

BAM

I just want to work out my frus- tration ...

...by having some fun with a high schooler dressed in nothing but her bra and panties.

Continued in Volume 17

Next Volume Preview

BAKEMONOGATARI 17

Koyomi summons Hanekawa...

...who has transformed into the "Afflicting Cat."

He arrives at their showdown with a secret plan.

But what words will spew forth from his mouth?

Could it really be *the truth?*

Tsubasa Family pays the price.

COMING JANUARY 2023!

BAKEMONOGATARI (manga) 16

Kodansha Digital Edition

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